

**Appropriations Committee Hearing  
2/19/16**

**HB 5044**

***In Support of Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging  
By Susan Tomanio, Director of Elderly Services City of Danbury***

I am writing this testimony in support of Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging (CoA). As a licensed clinical social worker, the Director of Elderly Services for the City of Danbury, a CoA board member, someone who has elderly parents, and as a tax payer in the town of Bethel, I recognize the profound importance of the Commission's role in state government.

CoA plays a unique role in the legislative branch. CoA is responsible for helping to create policy that supports older adults in Connecticut. It plays an integral role in bringing policy to fruition in the form of passed legislative bills.

In Danbury we have regularly utilized CoA's expertise to inform the work of the Danbury Aging in Place Council, especially in light of CoA's legislative charge to spearhead the livable communities initiative, aimed at helping municipal leaders support residents in their journey to age in place and age in community. In doing so, we enhance the work of existing organizations by creating additional mechanisms and opportunities for coordination and collaboration; address gaps in the current service delivery system through the creation of new collaborative initiatives and/or programs; and create a system of measurement to guide public and private investment.

Connecticut is the 7th oldest state in all of America, soon to be the 6th. Connecticut needs a non-biased voice for our aging population, not only to serve the elderly, but to help prevent our state from being bankrupt by 2030 through heavy use of Medicaid. CoA is a leader in "rebalancing" efforts including: the Money Follows the Person program, and in part due to their vision and leadership, has been responsible for bringing millions of dollars in revenue to Connecticut.

The CoA board brings the voice of the local people up to state government where they can have additional representation in regards to aging issues.

CoA is an invaluable resource to the legislature, informing them in a non-biased way on issues affecting our elderly so as they have the information they need and rely on.

It is for these reasons that I urge your continued support of the Commission on Aging and its critical work. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Thank you. Susan M. Tomanio, LCSW, Director, Elderly Services, City of Danbury, Elmwood Hall, 10 Elmwood Place, Danbury, CT 06810